

Northwest Tribal Dental Support Center Report for 2008 ADO/HQ Meeting (For Period August 1, 2007 to July 31, 2008)

The Northwest Tribal Dental Support Center (NTDSC) continued providing services as specified in the contract for Grant Year #8, which runs from August 1, 2007, to July 31, 2008. Major activities during the past year included clinical and prevention site visits, planning for the 2008 Prevention Coordinators Meeting, participation in the Registered Dental Hygienist (RDH) Challenges course at Chemawa and the National IHS RDH Update Conference in Portland in May 2008, making arrangements for the provision of continuing dental education credits for the prevention presentations during site visits, exploring possible strategies to include a dental component in the NARCH grant, and investigating options for filling the clinical consultant position, which will become available when Jeff Hagen retires on July 31, 2008.

The overall goal of the NTDSC is to improve the oral health of American Indian people in the Pacific Northwest. NTDSC activities are listed in six categories, corresponding to the six grant objectives.

Objective 1: Provide technical assistance to Portland Area dental programs through 4-6 clinical and 8-12 prevention site visits yearly. (Note: The number of clinical site visits to be provided was reduced from 8-12 to 4-6 for this grant year).

- The clinical consultant (Dr. Jeff Hagen) provided a total of seven clinical site visits during the first 11 months of the grant year, which exceeds the clinical objective for the year. The prevention consultant (Dr. Bonnie Bruerd) conducted twelve prevention visits during the grant year, which meets the upper end of the range listed in the objective. Some of the site visits consisted of standard dental program reviews, while other visits were targeted visits to provide orientation for new staff or to meet specific needs identified by the local programs. Technical assistance was also provided during the year to numerous other programs by phone and email correspondence.

Objective 2: Improve access to dental care at programs served by the NTDSC, per the GPRA objective to maintain or improve access to care.

- Access to dental services was monitored during each site visit using RPMS data, and this information was provided to the dental staff to assist them with program planning. Recommendations were provided to improve overall access to dental services, including guidelines to improve patient flow and alternative models for appointment scheduling. This is a long-term objective that will be monitored annually to determine progress.
- Because clinical efficiency is important for improving access to dental care, Dr. Hagen made a presentation at each site visit summarizing highlights from the "IHS Dental Clinic Efficiency and Effectiveness Manual." The NTDSC also distributed copies of this manual to all IHS and tribal dental programs in the Portland Area in September 2007. The efficiency/effectiveness manual was developed by Dr. Hagen for another IHS dental program project.
- For the GPRA year ending June 30, 2007, the Portland Area met its GPRA objectives on access and topical fluoride but missed its objective on dental sealants. At the time of this writing, data for the GPRA year ending June 30, 2008, were not yet available.

Objective 3: Improve access to prevention services for American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) people served by the Portland Area, in accordance with GPRA and Healthy People 2010 objectives in the areas of sealants, topical fluoride, ECC (Early Childhood Caries), and access for patients with diabetes.

- Access to prevention services was reviewed during site visits, and recommendations were provided for improving access to these services. Many of the recommendations included a community-based approach to prevention.

Objective 4: Assist dental programs in planning and evaluating HP/DP programs toward reaching Healthy People 2010 Objectives.

- During each site visit Bonnie Bruerd worked with the dental staff to develop specific local HP/DP objectives, which will help them to meet the Healthy People 2010 Objectives.
- NTDSC staff distributed information on additional grant opportunities to support local prevention efforts.

Objective 5: Identify training needs and provide training opportunities yearly.

- The NTDSC sponsored the Portland Area Dental Chiefs Meeting in Portland, Oregon, on September 11-12, 2007.
- In March 2008 Bonnie Bruerd presented at the DDS Challenges Course (Chemawa).
- The NTDSC helped to coordinate and made presentations (Dr. Kathy Phipps and Dr. Bonnie Bruerd) at the RDH Challenges course and National RDH Update conference (Portland) in May 2008.
- Two hours of continuing dental education credit (Prevention Update Course) were provided for 63 dental staff during site visits between September 2007 and June 2008.
- The NTDSC will sponsor the combined Prevention Coordinators/Portland Area Dental Chiefs Meeting at Suquamish in July 2008. Between 40 and 50 participants are expected to attend the Prevention Coordinators Meeting. CDE credit will be provided.

Objective 6: Work with IHS Headquarters and other Dental Support Centers toward meeting national HP/DP objectives.

- Joe Finkbonner (Director, NTDSC and Director, Northwest Portland Area Indian Health Board), Bonnie Bruerd, and Jeff Hagen participated in the national IHS OHP/DP quarterly conference calls in Sept. 2007, Dec. 2007, Mar. 2008, and June 2008.
- Bonnie Bruerd worked with Dr. Woody Crow and Mary Brickell to obtain Portland Area GPRA data to assess our mid-year progress towards meeting GPRA objectives.
- Bonnie Bruerd provided a one-hour course on POARE via conference call for dental staff throughout the Nashville Area.
- Bonnie Bruerd serves on the Oregon Early Childhood Cavities Prevention Committee.

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